



## Taylor, Risser Statement on 'Fund the Freeze' Campaign at UW

**For Immediate Release**

**May 2, 2017**

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### *Risser and Taylor support American Federation of Teachers call to "Fund the Freeze"*

The University of Wisconsin has faced cuts in five of the last six budget cycles. In fact, since 2011, cuts to the UW have totaled \$795 million. This comes at a time when most states, under both Democratic and Republican control, have decided to reinvest in their colleges and universities.

Cuts to the UW have resulted in fewer and bigger classes, fewer advisors, and more time to a degree for students. Because the state has cut the UW budget while freezing tuition, our students have suffered more than ever, and the quality of our world-renowned university is at risk. Additionally, we risk a competitive edge to other states—unless we invest now.

"While almost every other state decided to begin reinvesting in higher education during the last budget, Governor Walker and legislative Republicans remained steadfast in taking a sledgehammer to our kids with a cut of \$250 million to UW System. If there's one thing we can agree on – it's that our kids deserve the best," Taylor remarked. "They don't deserve bigger classes. They don't deserve adding another year of school simply because the classes they need aren't available. They deserve every single opportunity that gives them the best chance of success."

Gov. Walker has proposed a new tuition cut to reduce the cost of a college education at the UW. Making college more affordable is a good thing. But the legislature must fully fund the previous tuition freeze and any future tuition cut in order to preserve the quality of a UW education for students. The proposed tuition cut shouldn't come with strings attached. New funding shouldn't depend on performance metrics that will discourage the UW from admitting the very students who already face the highest barriers to a college education.

A college education is more important than ever for Wisconsin students' well-being and secure future. Making sure that every Wisconsin student can afford a quality UW education is critical for every community in Wisconsin and our state's overall economic prosperity.

"The University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Idea are the heart of the state's economic and intellectual engine," said Senator Fred Risser. "Previous cuts in funding for the University have negatively impacted our world-class reputation and the quality of education received by students. These cuts have had a serious effect on the morale of the faculty and staff." Senator Risser added: "Strengthening our commitment to education and the job creating skills that the University of Wisconsin produces should be a top legislative priority."

That is why Risser and Taylor are joining the American Federation of Teachers in calling for the tuition freeze and the proposed tuition cut to be fully funded. Now is the time for Gov. Walker and the state legislature to show they will invest in our students and in the future of the UW. It's time to Fund the Freeze.

The petition to Fund the Freeze can be found at [fundthefreeze.org](http://fundthefreeze.org).

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